

Brownfields Supplemental Assistance

Colrain, MA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA awarded the Town of Colrain supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot. Colrain (population 1,757) is a rural town located in the hills of western Massachusetts. In August 1996, the Town lost its largest employer and taxpayer, American Fiber & Finishing (AF&F). The cotton bleaching mill had been in continuous operation for 150 years. The loss of this major employer has devastated Colrain's economy. As a result of the complex's closing, 160 people lost their jobs. The Town's unemployment rate is 8.7 percent, fifth-highest in the state, and nearly 11 percent of the community's residents live in poverty.

Colrain wants to facilitate the redevelopment of the AF&F site to create jobs, stabilize the local tax base, and establish a process for redeveloping other brownfields in the town. The initial assessments at the site found more extensive contamination than originally anticipated. It was also concluded that the potential for contamination migration to the two on-site water supplies and Zone 2 protection wells was greater because of the building removal activities at

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Colrain, Massachusetts

Date of Announcement:
March 2000

Amount: \$40,000

Profile: The Pilot targets two sites for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment activities, including a former cotton bleaching mill and an abandoned, fire-ravaged mill.

Contacts:

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Selectmen
Town of Colrain
(413) 624-3454

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 1
(617) 918-1209

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/bmffd/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

the site. In addition to the AF&F site, the Pilot will also target the abandoned Upper Mill site for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment.

OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Colrain's goal is to cleanup and redevelop the contaminated mill sites to protect human health and the environment, create permanent jobs, and strengthen the local tax base. In addition, to on-site mill contamination, the Pilot will focus on assessing the potential risks posed to the North River and the water supply for the nearby towns. Related efforts are underway to restore the North River habitat for salmon.

To accomplish these objectives, the Pilot plans to:

- Conduct comprehensive Phase II assessments and prepare cleanup plans at the AF&F and Upper Mill sites, including an assessment of the North River;
- Provide the public with understandable information about the assessment results;
- Develop reuse plans for both sites; and
- Facilitate citizen involvement in the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment at both sites.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.